Public Lectures at the VU - *Open Colleges*
April / May 2012 (Period 5, „Introduction to Peace Theology“)

Organized by:

**The Amsterdam Center for Religion, Peace & Justice Studies**
(Doopsgezind Seminarium, VU Faculteit Godgeleerdheid)

In cooperation with:
ACCORD – Amsterdam Center for the Study of Cultural and Religious Diversity
VISOR – Institute for the Study of Religion, Culture, and Society
Vereniging Kerk en Vrede

**The Spirit of Nonviolent Peacebuilding in the Theologies of World Religions**

The relation of religion and violence is ambivalent, to say the least. In many conflicts – regional as well as global – religion seems to play a role: it provides a group identity, it orients moral behavior in telling its members what is good and what is bad. In its fundamentalist variations religions tend to call for a fight against the „evil“. – Mass media usually show the violent results.

Is this a misuse of religion – for political, economic, and ideological reasons?

This series of lectures intends to make visible the *non-violent* peace-building potential within world religions. The underlying assumption is: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam carry within their beliefs and (hi-)stories roots for a spirit of non-violence and peaceful coexistence. Can these roots be lifted up for peace-building and non-violent conflict resolution?

Experts in *Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* are invited to identify these sources and clarify the particular understanding of peace building as well as discuss among each other.
Program:

Thursday, 05. April 2012, 13.30-15:15
Modern Hindus Reject Violence: Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi on the Use of Violence in Politics
Dr. Victor van Bijlert (lecturer Indian Religions)

Thursday, 12. April 2012, 13.30-15:15
The Concept of Teshuvah in Jewish Tradition as a Way Towards Reconciliation
Dr. Rachel Reedijk (Cultural Anthropologist, Amsterdam)

Thursday, 19. April 2012, 13.30-15:15
Nonviolence as the Central Theme of the New Testament – and the Historic Peace Churches
Prof. dr. Fernando Enns (hoogleraar Peace-Theology and Ethics, VU)

Thursday, 26. April 2012, 13.30-15:15
The Dao of Non-Violence: Mutual Interconnectedness as a Way to Peace in Chinese Buddhism
Prof. dr. André van der Braak (bijzonder hoogleraar Boeddhistische Filosofie, VU)

Thursday, 03. May 2012, 13.30-15:15
'The Importance of Religious Communication for Peace in Islam'
Dr. Mohammed Ajouaou (universitair docent Islam, VU)

Tuesday, 15. May 2012, 13.30-15:15
Panel Discussion with all Participating Lecturers
Moderation: Prof. dr. Willie van der Merwe (hoogleraar Godsdienswijsbegeerte, VU)

Format: 45 min lecture followed by 45 min discussion with audience.
Language: English, Dutch is possible
Location: VU Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
More information and register: seminarium@ads.nl 020-6230914

The lectures will be published afterwards (in English and possibly also in Dutch)